



Free Prom Dresses for Girls in Central Indiana

Non-Profit Hosts Three Prom Dress Giveaway Events in March

For Immediate Release: February 4th, 2019

Whitestown, Ind. – Carla Mann always looked forward to prom. She joined the prom committee, helped decorate her high school gymnasium for the dance, and loved picking out the prom dress and accessories that would make her feel like a princess for a night. Back then, if a young lady didn't have the money for a prom dress -- she just stayed home, skipping the prom and missing the memories it would create.

Carla had no idea that, decades later, she would be drawn to a mission to help girls in need enjoy the prom, despite their financial situation. It was an unexpected calling. Last year, while driving in her car one day, Carla heard a radio commercial about the upcoming prom season. In a flash, it weighed on her heart that she wanted to start a ministry to help girls in financial need enjoy their prom night.

"I had been thinking and praying for some time about starting a ministry to help others. In that moment, God laid it upon my heart to start a ministry for girls who cannot afford a prom dress and accessories to come and pick out all those items at no expense to them." Carla explains.

Carla enlisted her sister, who also loved the idea. Their first challenge: where to get all the prom dresses needed for such a big endeavor. They started scouring on-line garage sale sites in January of 2018, diligently looking for reasonably priced dresses they could purchase. They also combed Goodwill stores and had quite a bit of luck finding very gently used, pretty dresses, clutches, and prom shoes that had only been worn once. They also got a huge response from Facebook, collecting close to 75 dresses in a very short time. Another non-profit donated another 150 dresses to them a short time later.

"We were completely overjoyed and overwhelmed by the generosity! This was when we knew God wanted us to do this! It couldn't have been clearer."

Carla set up prom dress giveaways at two central Indiana high schools in 2018. She'll never forget seeing the joy on the young ladies' faces as they picked the perfect prom dress and accessories to make them feel beautiful -- and help make their prom night a night they'll remember fondly forever.

"We met the most wonderful young ladies at these two events! My sister and I got to see complete happiness and joy on the girls' faces. It's exactly what we'd hoped this ministry's purpose would be."

In a little over a year's time, Carla's ministry has gone from a thought -- to a major undertaking. Heading into their 2nd season, Carla got some more unexpected news: the woman leading up a similar organization, called 'Project Prom', had decided to retire after 16 years, and wanted Carla to take up the reins.

"We, again, were completely overwhelmed and couldn't believe she chose us! She's going to help us transition before completely handing it over to us. We are very grateful for her help." says Carla.

Now, as Prom 2019 approaches, Carla and her sister have three events scheduled in March. They've also given their new 501(c) a name: 'Blessings & Bling'. "It just fit our mission, on all levels!" says Carla.

2019 Blessings & Bling Events: (Saturdays, 10am-2pm)

March 2nd

Flanner Buchanan Washington Park East - Life Center Ballroom
10722 East Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN

March 9th

Birch Bayh Community Center
716 N. 19th Street, Elwood, IN

March 16th

LifePoint Church
8540 Combs Road, Indianapolis, IN

About Carla: Carla works for the Town of Whitestown as the administrative assistant in the Planning and Community Development Department. She can be reached at: (317) 752-5359 or by email at: carlamann28@yahoo.com
Find Blessings & Bling on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/Blessings-Bling-556820481371383/>

Blessings & Bling is always collecting nearly-new prom dresses and accessories. There is a particular need currently for plus-size dresses and sizes 0 - 2, along with shoes sizes 8 - 11. The Whitestown Municipal Complex is one of several drop-off locations.